

## Diversity Committee Meeting

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, February 22, 2005
<b>Time:</b>	8-9 a.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Student Diversity Center
<b>Present:</b>	Terry Beck, Nancy Bristow, Julie Christoph, Marie DeBenedictis, Rosa Beth Gibson, Becca Herman, Yoshiko Matsui, Jm McCullough, and Carrie Washburn. Guest: Randy Nelson, Institutional Research
<b>Agenda:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Volunteer Secretary for today' s minutes</li><li>2. Review of Minutes: 2/8/04</li><li>3. Discussion with Randy Nelson</li><li>4. Other business</li></ol>

Julie Christoph opened the meeting at 8 a.m. Jm McCullough volunteered to take minutes.

Minutes from the February 8th meeting were approved with a clarification of suggested budget allocations

There were no announcements and the committee began discussions with Randy Nelson from Institutional Research. Randy' s purpose in meeting with Diversity Committee is to gather information useful in the design and implementation of the Campus Climate Survey scheduled to be administered at UPS in the fall semester.

Randy presented information about the up-coming campus climate survey. Randy has collected survey instruments from other campuses and stated goals for the survey included assessment of campus climate, incidents of harassment, attitudes toward diversity, and weaknesses in the diversity programs. Rosa Beth suggested that training effectiveness be included as an additional goal of the survey.

As discussion of the survey continued and it was noted that we really don' t know what the UPS climate is like for students. We need a benchmark and an assessment of the climate facing students. Nancy Bristow cited the Mills College climate survey as a good example of what should be done at UPS particularly because it addressed curricular issues. The committee had reviewed a large number of surveys from other schools and there was a discussion about differences between surveys at different schools. Randy pointed out that large schools have a bigger critical mass and can assess more groups, while state schools are often given mandates to examine certain elements. At UPS we need to focus on minority group opinions, but the committee questioned whether UPS has enough members in various groups, if we have to look at differences in curriculum and residential life. Randy responded that everyone at UPS would be included in the survey population, and the issue is more on of insuring turnout than of sampling. Faculty typically respond at the lowest rate.

According to Randy, the survey will be web based. There was a question about doing more than a survey, but it was felt that focus groups, for example, might be too constraining of responses to sensitive issues.

Randy wanted to know who should be contacted in the development of the survey. Obviously, Diversity Committee was one source of input. The committee suggested minority faculty and heads of programs focused on diversity issues like Black Studies, Gender Studies, *etc.* It was suggested that the Faculty Senate might play a role, not in development of the survey, but in encouraging faculty participation. Since Kris Bartanen is sponsor of the survey, it was suggested that she take this to the faculty. It was also suggested that this issue be brought to the Chairs for their support and encouragement of faculty participation.

It was suggested that the survey needed a clear statement of purpose. Terry suggested the survey should focus on what we do well as well as problem areas. Carrie stated the survey fits well with the strategic goal of creating a diverse environment. Nancy suggested tying the survey to assessment as a way of stimulating participation. After some discussion, the committee felt strongly that the design of the survey should be “left to professionals” and others should focus on assuring participation. It was recommended that the chairs be contacted in the fall semester before the survey is done to encourage their support.

For staff it was felt the survey should be discussed with the Staff Senate and the President’s Administrative Group. Human Resources should also be engaged to encourage staff participation. There was considerable discussion about the role of staff and recognition that staff members play a very important role in support for minority group members and in creating campus climate. It is more difficult to capture the role of staff in support of students of color. Certain staff members are helpful in this regard and the survey should capture this. Campus climate is not just the classroom and minority faculty and staff are impacted by the climate as well. There is a lot of counseling going on and this should be measured and recognized.

For students it was felt the survey should be discussed with ASUPS Diversity Council and after the election with the newly elected leadership. Diversity student groups should also be involved in discussions.

The committee felt that many of us “know” the climate at UPS and the survey should inform us of that climate and help us understand problems.

The discussion concluded with a discussion of “what is diversity?” Randy felt we should address disability, ethnicity, politics, religion, sex and gender, sexual orientation, and social class. Rosa Beth suggested we should consider only those groups recognized by policy. According to Randy a previous study showed political view points elicited the

greatest adverse reactions. There was a question about what was political. Is gender political?

Nancy stated that the purpose of the survey should be to identify the social characteristics of the strong that lead minority groups to feel uncomfortable. It was recognized that it is difficult to deal with social class although that is a major issue. Climate impacts many areas inside and outside the classroom and the survey should address these. In the end, however, the committee agreed that the professionals, *i.e.* Randy, should craft the survey instrument.

In other business Yoshiko raised the issue of a letter in the Trail critical of the decision not to have a Christmas tree in the SUB. The Diversity Statement was quoted in the letter. The committee decided not to respond to the letter at this time and there was general agreement that use of the Diversity Statement in debate and discussion was a good thing.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

Next Meeting:	Tuesday, March 8, 2005, 8 to 9 a.m., Student Diversity Center
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Respectfully submitted,  
Jm McCullough